

MERCATOR:

O R,

Commerce Retrieved,

B E I N G

CONSIDERATIONS on the State of the *British* Trade, &c.

From Saturday, February 27. to Tuesday, March 2. 1713.

*The Notion of Gaining a Million a Year by the Trade to Portugal, very absurd.
We do not Trade for a Million a Year to Portugal, How then should we gain a Million?
The Trade between England and Portugal is thus described, To us Profitable, but to them Necessary.
To stop our Trade to them would be a Loss to us; but to them it would be a Ruin and Desolation.
The Portuguese can neither vend the Growth of their Country at home, nor supply their Colony of Brasils abroad, without their Trade to England.
No Danger therefore, or Probability, that the Portuguese should stop the Trade, and we should abate the Quantity of Wines we take from them.*

THE *MERCATOR* has been Employ'd in two Papers in Detecting the scandalous Falshoods of the Opposers in what they assert about the Portugal Trade.

The present Falshood to be spoken of is, that we gain a Million a Year by that Trade.

That the Trade between Britain and Portugal is to both Nations a very great and gainful Trade, the *MERCATOR* is very free to allow, and has proved the Ballance to lie in our Favour to a very great Sum in the last *MERCATOR* for many Years past, as well before this Treaty as since: But that we ever gained a Million per Ann. by it, shall appear very ridiculous, in that it shall be found, upon Examination, that our whole Trade never amounted to that Sum, much less our Gain by the Trade.

But before we enter upon that, it is of some Profit to the Argument we are upon, to prove, that notwithstanding the Ballance of the Trade to Portugal was always on our side, yet that this Trade is equally necessary and profitable to the King of Portugal as to us, and that he cannot so well be without it as we can.

The Trade between Great Britain and Portugal has this general Character, which may be written upon it for the whole Nation to guide their Notions of it by, (*viz.*) *To us Profitable, but to the Portuguese Necessary.*

The *MERCATOR* is willing to grant, that when we speak of Trade in a Trading Nation, it may be allow'd, *That which is Profitable is Necessary*, in that sense: But in the present Case, the *MERCATOR* speaks of the Word *Necessary* in the most Extensive Sense, and let the Opposers make their best of it.

The Trade between Great-Britain and Portugal is absolutely necessary to the Portuguese; so necessary, that they could not carry on their own Trade without us; so necessary, as that they would be ruin'd and impoverish'd without it. It is true, that by *Necessary* is not to be understood Absolutely necessary to Life; they may have Cattle and Corn, and Houses and Land, without us.

But it is absolutely necessary for their Prosperity, their Wealth, their Encrease, and their Improvement: And this will be allow'd to be call'd a *Necessity* by all reaso-

nable Men. This Necessity, as above, is thus farther explain'd in general, that *They are not able to carry on their own Trade without us.* For Example;

1. They cannot vend the Growth and Produce of their Land without the English Nation.

2. They cannot supply themselves at home, or their Plantations in the Brasils abroad, which is their principal Trade, with Necessaries for Apparel, &c. without our Woollen Manufactures.

No Man will say, that it is not necessary to the Portuguese both to consume the Produce of their own Land, and to support their Colony in the Brasils; one is necessary to them at home, and the other is as necessary to them abroad.

It is then to be enquired, Whether the Portuguese are able to do either of these without us? It is obvious to all that understand the Nature of Trade, especially of this Trade, that the Portuguese have no Market for their Native Productions, Salt excepted, but in the Queen of Great-Britain's Dominions: It was before insisted upon in the Case of our Trade to Spain, *MERCATOR*, No. and it holds good in this of Portugal: The main Product of Portugal, is Wine, Oil, Fruit and Salt; *The French take off NONE OF THESE, no not one sort, no not in the least Quantity; they are all as Dung in France; so the Portuguese cannot be supposed to look that way, nor will the French be able to hurt us there.*

The Dutch take nothing but Salt, and some few Oranges and Lemons: The Wine, Oil, Figs, &c. will Sell no where but here: If we do not take off these Productions, what would be the Consequence? Truly the Vines must be grubb'd up, the Olive-Trees cut down, the Figs, Oranges and Lemons rot upon the Trees, the Value of Lands must sink, the People want Employment; and all the Miseries that attend an impoverish'd Nation must follow; Is our Trade then necessary to them, or is it not?

2. They cannot supply themselves at home, or their extended Colonies abroad, at the Brasils, with Necessaries, (*viz.*) Wearing Apparel, Furniture, &c. for Houses, and the like, without our Woollen Manufacture. To enquire into this a little,

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The *MERCATOR* affirms, (1.) That no Country but England could supply them; And, (2.) They cannot supply themselves at all.

The French cannot pretend to it, nor ever did, and therefore the Opposers were in the Right of it the other Day, when they acknowledged in Print, that tho' the French Rivall'd us in other Places, they did not in Portugal; tho' it is wonderful to hear such an acknowledgement from these Men, after what they have said of the French Rivalling us in all the Markets in Europe. But they had another End to serve in it, and they guide their Arguments not by the Truth of the Consequences, but the Occasion they have for them.

Let us enquire into the Particulars: The Portuguese Consume yearly about 12000 Pieces of Woollen Cloth, 20000 Pieces of Bays, 60000 dozen of Stockings, and Ten hundred thousand Pound weight of Stuffs and Serges, besides other Woollen Goods; take the Year 1705 for the Standard, and this will appear to be True. What Country in the World can supply them with these things? Our Opposers confess'd the French do not; and we know the Dutch cannot: There is not a Commodity of its kind more absolutely necessary to the Portuguese than the Colchester Bays; they cannot be without them; they are essential to their Clothing; a Man is not compleatly Dressed there without a Bays Cloak; nor can any thing serve them instead of it. In the Year 1702, they took off from us of Colchester Bays 21201½ Peices.

Now the *MERCATOR* desires these People to take Notice, and let them gainsay it if they can, That no Nation in the World can make those kinds of Manufactures call'd Bays but the English; nay, even in England no County can make them but the County of Essex.

The Value of the Bays we send to Portugal in a Year is superior to all the Wines, which they furnish us with in a Year. There is no Comparison between the Occasion for these in the Two Nations; we might be without all their Wines, and never provoke our People to Mutiny and Rebellion; the *MERCATOR* is of Opinion, that the King of Portugal could never force his People to leave off the English Bays, especially in Brasils; it would endanger a Revolt, they could not bear the excessive Heats without such a Garment, so thick and yet so light, which, as it is easie to carry, is their skreen from the Violence of the Sun, and they could scarce live and do their Business without it.

As to the Dutch supplying them, it is true they might, but then it must be of our Goods; which is saying nothing: The like may, tho' not with the same Circumstances, be said of our other Woollen Manufactures.

The Trade to their Brasils is very great, and what is the Export they carry? Answer, European Goods from all Countries; as follows:

Wrought Silks from Italy, (viz.) from Genoa and Leghorn.

Wrought Silks, Linen, and Lace from France.
Linen from Holland and Hambro'.
Woollen Manufactures from England.

In the Value of these Exportations, the English Woollen Manufactures are treble to any kind or any Countries Exportation.

It is true, the Dutch send Woollen Cloths, such as they are, to Portugal, and the French a pretty large Quantity of fine Silk Druggets, and coarse Woodmill Stuff, like a Hair Frize, for the Peasants and Poor.

But the Exportation from England is what the Portuguese depend upon for Woollen Goods; both for Apparel and Household Stuff; and as it is evident they cannot be supplied any other way, the English Trade is therefore absolutely necessary to them.

Let any one sedately consider these things, and with Impartiality too, as to Party, and let them tell us; Is this the Trade that we are told the Portuguese will Prohibit!

Is this the Trade they will put a stop to! meerly for the sake of our abating 2 or 3000 Ton of their Wine a Year; nay, tho' we were to take no Wine at all, they would not do it. Again,

Because we will not take 8000 or 10000 Ton of Wine a Year, will they prevent our taking 4 or 5000 Ton?

If we will take none of their Wine, will they prevent our taking their Oil and Fruit, their Salt and their Shumach; Is this Rational! Will not their Country be ruin'd by such a Prohibition? And would it not be Hurting themselves more than Hurting us? It is true, it would be a Loss to us, but it would be a Ruine to them: For the Portuguese not to take our Manufactures, will be to us a very great Damage; no Body but will Dispute that: But for us not to take their Produce of Wine, Oil and Fruit, would be a meer Desolation to them: The Damage is not equal in its Consequences at all, tho' it may be in the Sum; for they would be undone by it, which, God be praised, we should not. The *MERCATOR* wishes these Men would weigh this Argument, and let their own Consciences testify, whether what is here said is reasonable or not.

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